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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia
SUBJECT KOVMAT, National Corporation, Prague II

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION
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1. In January 1952 the Kovomat, National Corporation comprised all hardware stores, retail and wholesale and was divided as follows:

- Kovomat 022 which sold iron fittings for cabinet makers;
- Kovomat 023 which sold kitchen utensils;
- Kovomat 024 which sold ovens and cooking ranges;
- Kovomat 025 which sold armatures and plumbing materials.

Kovomat 022 - 025 were wholesale stores only; retail sales were limited to the region of Prague. Every region in Czechoslovakia had its wholesale distribution station "Kovomat". All these wholesale distribution stations were subordinated to the Directorate in Prague, which had the address: "Kovomat", National Corporation, Directorate in Prague II, and whose director was Mr (fnu) Sedlmaier.

2. The wholesale distribution station for Kovomat 022 delivered iron fitting for cabinet makers which were sold in "Kovomat" hardware shops. Each wholesale distribution station did its own bookkeeping. "Kovomat" 022 was equipped with four trucks of various models. The average turnover of Kovomat 022 was 127 million Kcs per year. This wholesale distribution station supplied the entire Prague region with iron fitting for furniture, iron bars for curtains, iron fittings and the like for new buildings, etc.
3. The director for "Kovomat" 022 was Josef Kramar. The total number of employees was 900, 520 of which were administrative employees. The basic wage was 710 Kcs per week, and the highest monthly wage was around 5,000 Kcs.
4. Only about 10% of the employees were card-bearing Communists. These people were not, however, Communist from conviction. They were members of the Party mostly in order to acquire better jobs. The head of the firm was a Communist, but otherwise he was a man of good character. He employed, for instance, persons who were considered politically unreliable. If the police (STB) asked him to give a report about an employee, he always gave a favorable report.

The employees worked only in one shift; that was from 0700 to 1200 hours and from 1400 to 1800 hours.

All products sold by Kovomat were of Czechoslovak make with the exception of the padlocks which were imported from Hungary.

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5. Storehouses of "Kovomat 022" were as follows:

1. Storehouse in Prague, Jindriiska Street 5, where furniture fittings were stored.
2. Storehouse in Prague, Jindriiska Street 3, where iron bars for curtains, etc were stored.
3. Storehouse in Prague-Mala Strana, Velkoprerovske Square, where fittings for new buildings, etc were stored.
4. Storehouse in Prague - Smichov, which was a reserve storehouse.

6. "Kovomat 022 - 025" existed as independent enterprises until 1 Oct 51. On that date "Kovomat" was merged with four other national corporations: "Elektra"; "Mototechna"; "Novy Byt" (New home); and "Sklo a Porculan" (Glass and China). These five merged enterprises were then called "Wholesale for household utensils" (Velkoobchod s potrebami pro domacnost). The directorate remained at the same place, but many administrative changes were carried out. This merger was, however, a failure, and on 1 Jan 52 "Mototechna" was again made independent under the name "Mototechna - automobil a motosektor", National Corporation in Prague.

It is believed also that "Electra" will be made independent again, as a next step.

Changes as described above result in considerable confusion in the administration of the national corporations and also have a bad effect on distribution of the respective products.

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